The Gallup Poll . Pittsburgh Press 12/26/76

80% Believe Kennedy Death A Conspiracy

By GEORGE GALLUP

PRINCETON, N.J. — As the House Select Committee on Assassinations begins its investigations, the overwhelming majority of Americans believe that others besides Lee Harvey Oswald were involved in the assassination of President John F. Kennedy in Dallas on Nov. 22, 1963.

In the latest survey, just completed, 80 per cent think others were involved in the assassination, while only 11 per cent think Oswald acted alone. Nine per cent do not express an opinion.

Persons with a college background, while overwhelmingly of the opinion that some form of conspiracy was involved, are less inclined to hold this view than are persons with less formal education.

Approximately one-half of the respondents who believe others were involved did not name a specific group. Among those who did, however, Cuba or Castro were mentioned most often. Other responses frequently given are "the Mafia," "Communists," and the CIA.

The same survey also shows that few Americans believe James Earl Ray acted on his own in the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Memphis on April 4, 1968. Only 18 per cent hold this view, while 69 per cent think others were involved and 13 per cent do not express an opinion.

An investigation into the assassinations of Kennedy and King was recently launched by the newly established House Select Committee on Assassinations — the sixth investigation to be conducted by government officials since Kennedy was assassinated.

Richard A. Sprague, chief counsel of the House Committee, recently told Congress that the reinvestigation of the deaths of Kennedy and King would cost more than $13 million.

One week after the Kennedy assassination, a large majority of Americans expressed doubts that Oswald had acted alone. A survey taken three years later (in January, 1967) indicated that these doubts had not been resolved. It was, therefore, evident that the report of the Warren Commission had failed to convince many Americans that Oswald alone was responsible.

The public, at the time, however, was opposed to a new investigation.

Here is the question asked in the three surveys:

"Do you think one man was responsible for the assassination of President Kennedy, or do you think others were involved?"

The trend:

KENNEDY ASSASSINATION

	One Man	Others Involved	No Opinion
November 1963	29%	52%	19%
January 1967	36	50	14
December 1976	11	80	9

This question was also asked:

"Here is a question about the assassination of civil rights leader Martin Luther King. Do you think one man was responsible for the assassination of Martin Luther King, or do you think others were involved?"

The results:

KING ASSASSINATION

	One Man	Others Involved	No Opinion
December 1976	18%	69%	13%

The latest survey results reported are based on in-home, in-person interviews with 1,520 adults, 18 and older, interviewed in more than 300 scientifically selected localities across the nation during the period Dec. 10-13.

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